



Becoming an ACUB Partner



The ACUB Program represents a powerful tool and unique opportunity to work in partnership with states, other governments, and public or private environmental and conservation groups to achieve a common goal of sustainability by establishing conservation buffer areas outside the installation boundary. By becoming a partner, you can help address incompatible land use and unconstrained development, preserve sensitive habitats, and promote sustainability.

Who Is Eligible

In accordance with 10 USC §2684a, an eligible partner is a state government or private organization whose purpose is land or natural resource conservation. This includes land trust organizations, federal and state agencies, tribes, non-government organizations, and the private sector.

ACUB partnerships enable private lands in the vicinity of military bases to be preserved as conservation lands and maintained by land trusts and/or an appropriate state conservation agency.

Conservation organizations are becoming the military's most effective neighbors by collaborating to protect land adjacent to military installations.

For further information, contact:

LTC Joe Knott
ACUB Program Manager
703-601-1596
joseph.knott@hqda.army.mil

Mr. Scott Belfit
Army Environmental Center
410-436-1556
scott.belfit@us.army.mil

Mr. Chad Henry
Training Lands Office
703-692-6411
chad.henry@hqda.army.mil

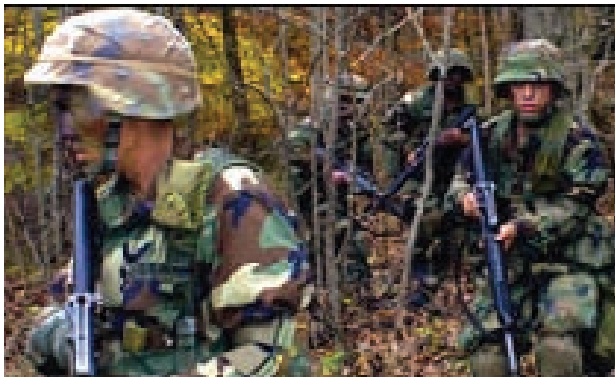
Or, visit the ACUB website at:

www.sustainability.army.mil/acub.htm

Army Compatible Use Buffer Program

Partners for Sustaining
Natural Habitats

Urban development is increasing rapidly around the country and is the most significant factor contributing to the loss of habitat and endangered species.



Why the ACUB Program Is Needed

The United States originally established military installations in rural areas far from population centers. As the nation's population has grown, urban sprawl now abuts many installations. Noise, dust, and smoke from weapons, vehicles, and aircraft prompt citizen complaints about military training. Commanders frequently are required to choose between being good neighbors and meeting training and testing requirements. Noise concerns, the presence of cultural and historic resources, and the distribution of endangered species can result in training restrictions affecting military readiness. This is referred to as encroachment.

Encroachment is defined as urban development surrounding military installations that affects the ability of the military to train realistically. More than 40 percent of installations report encroachment issues.

Private Lands Initiative

The compatible use buffer concept began in the 1990s at Fort Bragg in the Sandhills region of North Carolina. This area is dominated by a pine ecosystem that is home to the red-cockaded woodpecker, an endangered species. After significant training restrictions were imposed because of the endangered-species habitat on post, Fort Bragg, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the state, and other regional partners began to look for solutions to halt the habitat's decline. In 1995, the Army entered into a cooperative agreement with The Nature Conservancy to identify and acquire private land or development rights from willing sellers for conservation.

ACUB Program Defined

In December 2002, Congress provided legislative authority to expand the Private Lands Initiative. 10 USC §2684a allows military departments to partner with government or private organizations to establish buffer areas around active training and testing areas. The Army implements this authority with the ACUB Program.

ACUBs are a new and innovative tool to address encroachment and achieve conservation objectives. An ACUB allows an installation to work with partners to encumber land to protect habitat and training without acquiring any new land for Army ownership. Through ACUBs, the Army reaches out to partners to identify mutual objectives of land conservation and to prevent development of critical open areas. In turn, the military can conduct training and operations with little compromise while local community partnerships assume habitat, biodiversity, and wildlife management responsibilities.

The ACUB Process

Army Headquarters has formalized an ACUB process that is initiated locally at the installation level but reviewed, approved, and funded centrally. For ACUBs, the cooperating partner purchases easements or fee-simple property from a willing seller with funds contributed by the Army and other partners. These areas provide a natural buffer between military training lands and residential or commercial activities for perpetuity. The partner, not the Army, receives the deeded interest in the property and provides for long-term habitat management. Pursuant to the terms of the Cooperative Agreement and with land-owner permission, the installation may retain access rights to conduct compatible military training.

ACUB Objectives

- Reduce training restrictions
- Meet Endangered Species Act recovery responsibilities
- Prevent development along installation boundaries
- Prevent future threatened and endangered species listings

Current ACUB Partnerships

As of August 2005, ACUB partnership agreements are in place at Camp Ripley, MN; Camp Blanding, FL; Fort Carson, CO; U.S. Army Garrison, HI; Fort Sill, OK; Fort Stewart, GA; Fort Bragg, NC; and Fort A.P. Hill, VA. To date, more than 65,000 acres have been protected through ACUBs, with agreements and funding in place for another 38,000 acres in FY05.